TO THE RIGHT

HONOURABLE

THE

LORD Viſcount MONT-CASSEL:

This FABLE is moſt humbly Dedicated by a PERSON who had ſome ſhare in his EDUCATION.

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 Sheridan

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THE

LORD Viſcount

Mont-Caſſel, &c.

A *Peacock* nobly *born*, and *bred*,
Once took a fancy in his head,
Whether for *pleaſure*, *health*, or *food*,
To ramble in a neighb'ring *Wood*,
The *Birds* around from ev'ry Tree,
Crowded in flocks the ſight to ſee,
His *Train*, adorn'd with glitt'ring *Rays*,
Provokes their *Malice* not their *Praiſe*.

But ſoon his *envy'd ſplendor* drew
Cenſure from all the *vulgar crew.*
Each *bird*, as if by *mankind* taught,
Turn'd all his Wit to find a fault;
And whereſoe'er he took his flight,
They always kept him full in ſight.
Of him alone the *Forreſt* rung,
He grew the Talk of ev'ry Tongue.
Wiſe good-man Owl was hear'd to ſay,
The Peacock ſcratch'd his head to day.
The *Raven* ſwore in hollow Tone,
He ſaw him pick a dirty BONE.
For all his PRIDE (*ſays Goſſip Quail*)
He wants a FEATHER of his TAIL.
A *Linnet* came, and whiſper'd low,
He ſaw him BILL a Carrion CROW.
Others obſerv'd he ſpoil'd the *Wood*,
By nipping ev'ry tender Bud;
Did all the Miſchief in his pow'r
To ev'ry *Plant*, and ev'ry *Flow'r*;
The *Bloſſoms* enviouſly he gathers,
For fear they ſhou'd outvy his Feathers;
For *New-laid Eggs* he ſearch'd about,
Broke ev'ry one that he found out;
Nor was he ſatisfy'd to plunder,
He tore the very *Neſts* aſunder.
In ſhort what e'er he ſaid, or did,
Cou'd not by any means be hid.

BUT now for what was firſt in view,
My Lord, I turn my ſelf to you;
To you I make the Application,
The *Riſing Honour* of our *Nation*,

From

From *School* tranſlated to a *College*,
There to acquire ſuperior knowledge;
To have your *Noble Blood* refin'd,
By what can beſt adorn your *mind*.
You enter on a *Publick Stage*,
In the firſt Wildneſs of your Age,
And all around you *ev'ry Eye*,
On ev'ry thing you do, *a Spy*;
Where not *a trivial Act* can be,
From the ſevereſt *Cenſure* free.

IF ſmalleſt *Faults* can give a handle,
For *Calumny*, *Reproach*, and *Scandal*;
If true, or falſe, the World will talk,
How circumſpectly muſt you walk!

YOU know, my Lord, 'tis wiſely ſaid,
(And you the paſſage often read)
The hi her any Perſons riſe,
The more expos'd to cens'ring Eyes.
And if a *vicious courſe* they Steer,
How monſtrous will their *crimes* appear!

YOUR fellow-ſtudents will each day,
Find ſomething right or wrong to ſay;
Our LORD MONT-CASSEL miſt a Pray'r,
In ſpight of all his TUTOR's Care;
Inſtead of Lecture in the HALL,
His LORDSHIP was engag'd at BALL;
The little ſorry Theme he Writ,
Was ſcribled without fear or wit;
He fell in Company with ROOKS,
Who chous'd him out of half his BOOKS.

BUT

BUT ſhou'd you Copy *vulgar Lords*,
Whoſe Actions only vice records,
Whoſe very *Foot-men* ſhew more ſenſe,
Appear of *greater Conſequence*,
How *Foes* will ſmile! how *Friends* will grieve!
To find you ruin'd paſt Retrieve.
Nay all the *World* about will ſtare,
To ſee you ſlip thro' all our *Care*.

THEN liſten, while I now deſcribe
The grand Atchievments of your *Tribe*.
They *Drink*, they *Quarrel*, *Swear*, and *Game*,
And *Dick* the Footman does the ſame.
Behold a *knot of Peers* approach,
They juſt have bilk'd a *Hackney-Coach*;
Behold them in their *Tavern Ayrs*,
Kicking the *Drawers* down the Stairs;
Behold their Conduct at a *Play*,
What *Comedy* ſo good as they!
The valour of a *Noble Rake*,
At midnight makes a City quake,
The *Hero* breaks the *Watchman's* head,
And *Fights* the *Tradeſman* from his bed.
His *Lordly Soul* undaunted hears,
The *Windows* clatt'ring round his Ears,
With *buſy Hands* he keeps a doing,
Nor dreads at all the *Jingling ruin*.
And tho' his comrades all are flown,
He ſtays to throw the t'other Stone.
(Now change my Muſe, no longer jeſt,
A graver Style becomes the reſt.)

He

He blaſts his *Fortune*, *Health*, and *Fame*,
Without the leaſt regard to *Shame*.
At length when all his *credit*'s gone,
No *Trades-Man* left to be undone,
A *Peer reduc'd* he makes Pretenſion
To *Royal Bounty* for a *Penſion*;
Becomes to get a mean Support
A *truckling Vaſſal* to the *Court*.

O let it never once be ſaid,
My Lord, that you are thus miſled!
Let not your early Parts be loſt,
Which ſo much Pains and labour coſt.
Ill-natur'd Folks will ſay with joy,
That Lord was once a hopeful Boy.
And ev'ry *Friend* will grieve, to ſee
So fine a *Plant* a *Stunted-Tree*.

I know, my Lord, you can with eaſe
Command your *Paſſions*, as you pleaſe,
If they break looſe you are undone,
And down *a Precipice* you run.

LET *Prudence* ev'ry Action guide,
And only *Virtue* be your *Pride*.
Be juſt the ſame you were at School,
(I cannot give a better Rule;)
Where your *Example* has done more,
Then *Rods* cou'd ever do before.
Preſerve your *Honour*, and your *Truth*,
Thoſe lovely *Ornaments of Youth*,

By which you have diſtinguiſh'd been,
To the firſt dang'rous year *SIXTEEN*,
When too like *Icarus* we riſe,
And *Spurn* at what our *Friends* adviſe,
Till ſad Experience brings to view,
How raſh and giddily we flew.
Apply this Hint, and take it thus,
Your *Tutor* is your *Dædalus*;
His care will ſhew the *ſafeſt way*,
Your *duty* muſt be to obey,
Till *Rip'ning judgment* makes you ſee,
The *ſafeſt* Courſe as well as he;
As he directs, if you can *fly*,
With HONOUR Live, with HONOUR Dye.

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FINIS.